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OF THE

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THE AUXILIARY SYSTEM.

The Constitution of the American Baptist Home Mission Society contains ample provisions for an auxiliary relation with others of a more local character. As with all similar societies, in the infancy of their history, various modifications in the details of their auxiliary operations have been found necessary; but the experience of several years, aided by the counsels of brethren in different portions of the country, has enabled the Executive Committee to adapt those operations to the various circumstances under which the auxiliaries are found to exist, and to offer a foundation for pleasant and efficient co-operation in Home Missions throughout the denomination. The following are the leading features of our auxiliary system:

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS.

"Article 7. Any Baptist Missionary Society may become auxiliary, by agreeing to pay into the Treasury of this Society the whole of its surplus funds, and sending to the Corresponding Secretary a copy of its constitution and annual reports, mentioning the names of its missionaries, and the fields of their operations."

Remarks.—This article applies to any State Convention, General Association, or other body having in view the management or superintendence of domestic missions, and, although it requires the surplus funds of the body applying, in order to become auxiliary, the destitution of such funds does not prevent the auxiliary relation. If an auxiliary expend all its funds for missionary purposes within its own limits, it is presumed they are advantageously disposed of,—the work of missions is performed in that field to the extent of the means appropriated, without the intervention of the general Society. But if, after appropriating what is thought proper by the auxiliary, for their own state or district, a balance remain in their treasury, it is expected that it will be sacredly transmitted to our treasury for general purposes.

The requisition for the constitution, annual reports, and information of domestic operations, is, obviously, important and necessary. It will enable the parent society to understand the nature of the organization of its auxiliaries, and learn and report the whole amount of missionary labor performed by them.

"Article 8. Every auxiliary society who shall agree to pay the whole of its funds to this society, shall be entitled to a missionary or missionaries, to labor in such field as it may designate, to an amount at least equal to that of its contributions; provided such designation be made at the time of payment."

Remarks.—This article is specific in its object. It contemplates an auxiliary which, for any reason, prefers to avail itself of the aid of the Society's Executive Committee in promoting missionary interests. A variety of considerations may lead an auxiliary to such a preference. The Executive Committee having frequently before them numerous applications from ministers for appointment, might often better supply an auxiliary than the auxiliary could itself. Or the auxiliary may not possess sufficient funds to meet the necessities of their own state or district, and therefore, place the whole in the treasury of the Society, in order that an addition may be made to it: for the provision is, that it shall be entitled to an appropriation "*at least* equal to that of its contributions." Or the auxiliary might regard it as of paramount importance for the Society to supply the destitution of the new settlements in the West, in the British provinces, or Texas. This is the case with some auxiliaries in churches, and might be with others of a more general nature.

"ARTICLE 9. The officers of auxiliary societies shall be *ex-officio* directors of this Society, and their members shall be members of this Society."

Comment upon this article is unnecessary.

FINANCIAL OPERATIONS.

1. The Constitution of the Society contains three restrictions on the Executive Committee in the disposal of funds. First, in the 5th article, requiring "that all moneys contributed for any specific purpose shall be faithfully applied only to that particular object." Second, in the 8th article, which has already been mentioned; and third, what is implied in the 2d article, to expend the funds "to promote the preaching of the gospel in North America." With these restrictions the whole amount of the Society's funds are subject to the disposal of the Executive Committee, who, having the whole field before them, will always endeavor to distribute them as the necessities of the different portions of that field demand.

2. Their rule of action is, to give no prospective pledges of general appropriations, but "as far as the means of the Society will allow, all requests from auxiliaries shall be granted (having respect to a fair division of funds among the states, and providing for the contingencies in the 5th and 8th articles of the Constitution) for the aid of ministers, churches, or destitute places."

3. In determining what is a *fair* division of funds, the ability of the auxiliary to supply its own destitution, and the advance of the missionary spirit among them, are taken into consideration.

4. For the collection of funds the Society is dependent upon the voluntary contributions of individuals, churches, and other bodies, either auxiliary or otherwise; but its chief dependence is found to rest on its own Collecting Agents, who, in general, are efficient, not only in obtaining subscriptions, but also in exciting activity in the auxiliaries, and greatly aiding their agents when they employ them.

5. As a general rule, all agents appointed and paid by the Society, are required to deposit the funds collected in our Treasury, or that of the State Convention where the collections are made, at the direction of the Committee on Agencies and Finance. But in all the latter cases, the amount so deposited is subject to the order of the Executive Committee, for the support of the Society's missionaries in those states, to the amount appropriated for that purpose, and the surplus, if any, for general purposes.

6. In this arrangement two objects are contemplated. First, to avoid the risk and exchanges frequently arising on the transmission of funds from distant States. And, secondly, to render the payment of salaries convenient to the missionaries.

7. There are two classes of auxiliaries, viz: those which sustain domestic missions within their own borders, and aid the Society in addition by their surplus funds and extra contributions; and those which, in conducting such missions, are aided by the Society.

8. In general, the funds of auxiliaries of the first class are collected and paid into their treasury by their own agents, or primary societies, and the surplus transmitted to ours by their treasurer. But frequently our agents are encouraged to make extra collections within their boundaries; in which case the amount collected is paid directly into our treasury.

9. All extra contributions, obtained in any way within the borders of such auxiliaries will be, if desired by the auxiliary, passed to the credit of the donor, *through the auxiliary*.

10. Extra efforts to obtain funds for general purposes are seldom made within the borders of auxiliaries of the second class; but when made, the same course can be taken in giving credit for funds obtained.

11. In certain cases, if an auxiliary having missionaries of their own to sustain, desire the aid of an agent of the Society in collecting funds in their state, an arrangement can be made so as that from the funds collected, the whole or a part of the amount necessary for the purposes of that auxiliary shall be deposited in its treasury, and subject to its order; and the balance of collections transmitted to the general treasury: or, if the Society also have missionaries there, deposited in the treasury of the auxiliary for the payment of those missionaries' salaries.

12. It is expected that all auxiliaries will direct their treasurers to receive deposits of funds from any source to the credit of the Society, and provide for their safe-keeping and prompt payment, to the order of the Executive Committee of the Society.

CO-OPERATION OF AUXILIARIES.

1. It is expected that our auxiliaries will, as far as they are able, prosecute the necessary domestic missionary operations within the territory they occupy. If, however, they are unable to extend those operations as far as their necessities demand, the Society holds itself in readiness to aid them according to its ability,—having reference to the necessities of other auxiliaries, or portions of the country. In such cases it is expected that their Board of Managers will nominate or recommend all persons whom they desire us to appoint; stating or causing to be stated all the information required under the following heads; and (unless special arrangements are made by the Executive Committee) select the fields of such as may be sent among them by the Committee, from other places; that they will direct and superintend the labors of all the Society's Missionaries, so far as not to contravene the instructions of the Executive Committee; and advise the Committee, annually, respecting the appointment or reappointment, field, salary, &c. of all missionaries sustained by the Society in their territory *previous to the expiration of their appointment*. They will also give prompt notice of all ministers who would be useful as missionaries or agents, and are desirous of being employed as such, and all destitute places within their borders requiring attention; furnish an annual report of all their proceedings, the amount and expense of missionary labor performed under their exclusive direction, the names of their missionaries, fields of labor, and all such information as they possess to facilitate the designs of the Society.

2. All missionaries appointed by the Executive Committee are expected to labor and report according to the instructions given them from time to time, directly to the Corresponding Secretary. Those appointed to labor within the boundaries of an auxiliary will be placed under its direction and superintendence as before stated. They will also report to their Board of Managers, and furnish them a copy of the reports made to the Corresponding Secretary of the parent society as often as they require.

APPLICATIONS FOR AID.

INFORMATION REQUIRED.

All applications for our aid should be accompanied with information on the following points:—

FOR ONE CHURCH.

The name of the Church to be supplied; the town, settlement or village, county and State in which it is situated; the post-office address of the correspondent; the estimated number of inhabitants in the village or settlement; the number of communicants in the Church; the average number of attendants of all classes and ages at public worship on Sundays; the name (in full) of the minister proposed; his post-office address; his age; the number of his family (if he have one) *dependent on him for support;* whether he is regularly ordained, or a licentiate; the date when it is desirable his appointment should commence; the portion of time he is to devote to them; the total amount of salary necessary for his support if wholly engaged in the ministry; the portion of that salary which they will engage to pay for the given time; the portion which any auxiliary or other missionary body, propose to pay; the *least* amount that will suffice from the Society for the same period; whether there is another Baptist Church, and any of other denominations in the place; and any circumstances in their case to illustrate the necessity of their application.

FOR TWO OR MORE CHURCHES.

If the labors of the minister are to be divided between two or more churches, information as above, respecting each one is necessary.

FOR A VILLAGE OR SETTLEMENT.

If the application is for the supply of a settlement or village, where there is no organized Church, let the above information be given, substituting the name of the settlement or village for the Church, and stating the number of Baptist members known to be residing in it; or who, residing in the neighborhood, will probably unite in attending public worship with them.